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**Connecticut State Medical Society Testimony in Support of House Bill 5329 An Act
Eliminating the Inclusion of a Physician's Personally Identifiable Information for
Health Insurance Claims Forms
Presented to the Insurance and Real Estate Committee
February 117, 2010**

Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, on behalf of the more than 7,000 physician and physician-in-training members of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today in support of **House Bill 5329 An Act Eliminating the Inclusion of a Physician's Personally Identifiable Information for Health Insurance Claims Forms.**

Connecticut statute currently requires the inclusion of a Social Security Number (SSN) or Employer Identification Number (EIN) on the medical claim form. However, the use a SSN or an EIN for the purposes of submitting a claim is not necessary and their use merely increases the possibility for identity theft as health insurance claims often pass through many entities throughout the claims process.

Connecticut law bases its requirements for insurance claims on the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) 1500 paper claim form that is used throughout the health care industry for physician claims, including those that are ultimately converted by third-party billers and clearinghouses into an electronic format. Box 25 of this claim form contains a space for a physician's SSN. However, working closely with the American Medical Association (AMA), we found through CMS officials that carriers do not need a physician's SSN to process claims. Coverage is driven by the *patient's* eligibility. Eligibility is determined by the payer's eligibility file or other information contained on the claim.

Currently, under CMS regulations, physicians are only required to use a separate identification number assigned by an agreement with the contractor. Since CMS has removed the SSN requirement from the CMS 1500 form, it is appropriate to remove the requirement from statute in order decrease the possibility of identify theft to physicians. The impact of fraudulent use of identification on the total cost of the health care system cannot be calculated.

The CSMS governing board voted unanimously in favor of removing a physician's SSN or EIN from the medical claim form.

We respectfully ask you to support **House Bill 5329 An Act Eliminating the Inclusion of a Physician's Personally Identifiable Information for Health Insurance Claims Forms** and eliminate the requirement in Connecticut statute.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.